

Due May 1, 2008

**Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319**

***Request for Iowa Four-Year College/University
Performance Assessment System Funds***

College/University name: Northwestern College

Program Contact Person:

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Statement of Assurances

Should a Performance Assessment System Award be made to the applicant in support of the activities proposed in this application, the authorized signature on the cover page of this application certifies to the Iowa Department of Education that the authorized official will:

1. Upon request, provide the Iowa Department of Education with access to records and other sources of information that may be necessary to determine compliance with appropriate federal and state laws and regulations;
2. Use grant funds to supplement and not supplant funds from nonfederal sources.

Certification by Authorized or Institutional Official:

The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in this application is correct, that the filing of this application is duly authorized by the governing body of this organization, or institution, and that the applicant will comply with the attached statement of assurances.

Jasper Lesage Vice president for Academic Affairs

Typed or Printed Name of Authorized Official Title

Signature of Authorized Official

Date

Please submit both electronically and hard copy to Barry Wilson, TOE Assessment Team Leader, Dept. of Ed. Psych. & Foundations, UNI, Cedar Falls, IA by May 1, 2008.

Process for Procuring Grant Funds:

1. Submit Grant Request Package; Postmarked by May 1, 2008
Grant Request Package Contents:
 - Request for Performance Assessment System Funds Cover Page
 - Action Plan
 - Budget
2. Grant requests will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee, the Leadership Team, and the Iowa Department of Education.
3. Institution will be notified of a grant award by May 21, 2008
4. Contracts for awardees will be developed by the Iowa Department of Education upon notification to the IHE of the award.
5. It will take 30 days after the award notification for a contract to be executed and fully approved. This would be as per a June 1 notification.
6. Payments cannot be released until a contract is fully approved with all signatures.
7. Institutions should not incur costs before a contract is approved and plan accordingly.
8. To acquire each payment, an IHE must submit an invoice or letter with an original signature requesting funds. This is necessary for the release of each payment – fifty percent, forty percent, and final ten percent.
9. An Interim report must be submitted with an invoice by January 15, 2009. NOTE: an awardee will not receive the forty percent payment unless the Interim Report budget indicates that the first fifty percent has been spent.
10. A Final report must be submitted with an invoice by December 15, 2009
11. A report form or template is attached with this RFP. Please use it for the Interim and Final Reports. The form includes a narrative and budget.

The grant application and interim and final reports must be submitted electronically in addition to hard copy.

Criteria for Performance Assessment System Awards:

Grant funds are available for use by recipients for purposes including but not limited to faculty development and training, design or modification of performance tasks, procedures for assuring reliability and validity of assessments, database software or hardware to facilitate data management and reporting, and technical services including programming support.

Funds may be used for expenses such as: faculty release time, personnel for clerical work, travel, lodging and meals, consultants, hardware, and materials including software. Four year colleges or universities that receive significant numbers of transfer students from community colleges are encouraged to include funding for providing feedback to two-year institutions on the performance of their graduates.

I. Context

Describe current program including number of teaching candidates graduated per year and number of full-time and part-time faculty teaching education courses. Indicate any unique features of the program that will help reviewers better understand your assessment needs. If you received a previous assessment system award, attach a copy of your final report or summarize results of your first year of work.

The Teacher Education Program at Northwestern College is fully accredited by the Iowa Department of Education, the North Central Association, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In addition, the Northwestern Teacher Education Program is a member of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (IACTE). These professional organizations, along with the State of Iowa, have recently adopted “performance-based teacher education” as the model for education programs and the basis for both beginning teacher licensure and program assessment.

This means several things for education students at Northwestern. First, it means that the program is organized around specific knowledge and performances that are believed to be crucial for successful teaching. Secondly, the progress of students in our program is evaluated on the basis of their ability to meet these performance benchmarks. Progress will be halted at certain points in the program if students do not perform these benchmarks well. Thirdly, students need to exhibit professional dispositions (attitudes and habits) in addition to the knowledge they gain and the behaviors they perform to complete the education program. Finally, the accreditation of the Teacher Education Program at Northwestern College is based on evidence that the whole program is performance-based according to standards set by professional organizations and evidence that our students and graduates meet the standards as they are outlined and described. (Excerpt from the Northwestern College Teacher Education Policy Manual, Fall 2007)

Graduates Recommended for Licensure (Elementary and Secondary) Per Year

2005-06	61
2006-07	65
2007-08	84

Number of Faculty Providing Instruction and Supervision 2007-08

FT	PT-Instruction	PT- College Supervisors (Student teaching)
6	3	15 (Approximate)

Previous Assessment System Award –Summary (It should be noted that the final report from 2007 is included at the end of this document; however, the final report for 2008 has not been completed as the activities for this grant year have not all occurred.)

During 2007-08 we had four goals:

1. Refinement of Tools and Systems

A. Refinement of templates and rubrics

This is an area where the implementation of Livetext has continued to provide impetus and insight into areas in need of refinement within our assessment system. We did focus our energy as individual faculty members on the revision of templates and rubrics to better fit our benchmarked assignments, as well as update our program information on when certain competencies/benchmarks are introduced/reinforced and evaluated in a summative format. Another area of focus for this year has been to revise our evaluation tool for the student teaching experience, which we hope to pilot during the fall semester.

B. Provide structured opportunities for dialogue about critical issues

Over time and as we've had conversation within the department as well as with consultants from outside the institution, it has become increasingly clear that our focus in assessment needs to shift from candidate assessment to program assessment. We collect a great deal of data about how the students in our program are performing. We are excited about adopting the newer version of Livetext that will enable us to expand our capacity to better utilize the data that we do collect, as well as it's potential to document the effect of our students' instruction on their K-12 students' learning.

It is our intention to continue to utilize retreats and other opportunities beyond along with department meetings to assist us in our efforts to have continue to have opportunities for extended dialogue about both assessment-related issues, especially around how Livetext can assist us in making decisions about the program/curriculum.

C. Incorporate documentation in our Exhibit Center

Our Project Coordinator, Lila Sybesma, met with Eunice Meredith in May to work specifically on this goal. Lila will subsequently spend time in June on implementation and data entry.

D. Better Align NWC Professional Knowledge Base with INTASC Standards

The work that has been done to address this particular goal is primarily being accomplished via the revision and creation of a new tool to evaluate student teachers. We do recognize that this is only a beginning place.

2. Student Support

Weekly support session provided by the Project Coordinator have continued throughout the fall and spring semesters. Typically, 5-6 students attend each session, which ultimately means that 150-200 students (not necessarily an unduplicated number) have been served throughout the year. We do anticipate that the need for such regular support may diminish over time as students are more able to assist each other with Livetext related questions and issues. It may also be that we'll continue the practice of having help sessions available on a regular basis, but utilize student support (work-study) versus having the Project Coordinator lead these sessions. This year we also ended up having the

Project Coordinator lead help sessions for student teachers as they were in the process of completing their exit portfolios. Next year, we will return to having student-led workshops in the fall and spring to provide this service.

3. Faculty development and support

A. Enable Project Coordinator to attend 2007 National Conference

The project coordinator, Lila Sybesma attended the conference in July 2007. The coordinator is encouraging us to send more department members to the conference in the future, as she found it to be beneficial. Although we did not make specific plans to send anyone this year with the grant funds, we may choose to invest our own institutional professional development funds to support this in the future.

B. Engage in dialogue with a consultant/Livetext user to assist in assessment/refinement

As stated earlier, our Project Coordinator met with Eunice Meredith from Drake in May. She was able to assist us in pulling and analyzing data. Barry Wilson came to Northwestern College in April to talk to us about his perceptions of how our assessment system is working as we approach our upcoming national and state accreditation visits.

4. Collaboration

In March the unit held a meeting with all elementary level supervisors to address Livetext and its implementation. In addition, we held provided monthly meetings for secondary supervisors to meet and discuss program-related issues. Livetext has been an ongoing topic of conversation during these meetings. The Project Coordinator has made adjustments to forms and processes based on input from our supervisors. These monthly meetings also gave us the opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues outside of the education department to ensure that subject-specific standards were being incorporated and evaluated in particular majors. The utilization of Livetext by the students has definitely facilitated the incorporation of standards into lesson and unit planning in a very user-friendly way.

II. Project Narrative (1-2 pages describing how you will use the funds) A synopsis of the project narrative will be reflected in the Action Plan. Be sure that what you request in the new award is distinct from what was requested in any earlier TQE award. Your timeline for grant activity should not extend beyond December 15, 2009.

1. Refinement of Tools and Systems

A. Transition to the updated version of Livetext

Although Livetext generated a newer version of its products for Institutions of Higher Education (launched during the 2007-08 school year), NWC decided to wait at least 6 months before adopting the new system. This decision was made by the department in order to ensure that some of the kinks in the system had been worked out prior to our transition. (It should be noted that the Nursing Program at NWC had adopted the newer version when it was available, and are very happy with the new features available.) This transition will begin across the summer or 2008

B. Refine student teaching rubric-pilot in Fall 2008

The Teacher Education Committee has been working this year to align our student teacher evaluation with both our own Professional Knowledge Base and the Iowa Teaching Standards. It should be noted that the prior evaluation tool had been aligned with the INTASC standards. It is our hope to make final revisions during Summer 08 and pilot the new tool with student teacher supervisors in the fall. It will be extremely helpful to collect this data in Livetext for both candidate and program assessment purposes. We're especially looking forward to the new documentation of student learning feature In Livetext so that our teacher candidates will be able to analyze the effect of their instructional practices on the performance of their K-12 students.

C. Provide structured opportunities for dialogue about critical issues related to assessment within the Livetext system.

Stipends for faculty members to attend day-long training sessions and retreats has been critical in creating more extended periods of time for dialogue about assessment and Livetext related issues. As such, we are planning to increase the number of retreat/training days to ensure that all FT faculty members will become more comfortable and more proficient in collecting and analyzing the data-individually and collectively. It will be especially important for us to focus on the data that we have collected with regard to program assessment.

D. Continue to incorporate documentation in the Exhibit section of Livetext

This will be helpful to students and outside reviewers, and we acknowledge that we're at the very beginning stages of implementation in the use of the Exhibit section. Project Coordinator, Lila Sybesma's meeting with Eunice Meredith in May was especially useful in the creation of the exhibit center.

2. Student Support

A. Continue to offer technical support on a weekly basis to students.

This year we have provided support to students in using Livetext via ad hoc faculty demonstrations in class, but more importantly, we have continued to offer weekly technical support meetings that have been led by our Project Coordinator. Approximately 15 help sessions were offered in the fall semester, and 15 more will be offered during the spring semester. The project Coordinator estimates that 5-8 students have attended each of the hour long help sessions offered, with almost no duplication, meaning that each student only came once and was only counted once in her headcount. If this trend continues for the remainder of the semester, then it is likely that she will have provided technical assistance to 150-200 students across the academic year. It is our assumption that this weekly support will need to be provided for at least one more academic year.

B. Identify and train student/graduate to provide student-led workshops for exit portfolios

In the past, we have offered student or graduate-led workshops for exit portfolio development and refinement. This year, the Project Coordinator would like to work to identify and train a Livetext-proficient student/graduate to lead workshops for our student teachers. Two workshops will be offered in the fall semester, and two in the spring.

3. Faculty development and support

To accomplish this goal, we see that following as appropriate objectives:

A. Training for updated system in Livetext

During the first year of the grant, general training was offered from Livetext personnel. This year, we are anticipating that we are again in need of training to ensure that we can take advantage of the new features that have been added to Livetext

B. Focus on analysis of the candidate and program data that we are currently collecting as well as identify other data sources for program improvement

Goal	Objectives	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Budget Request
Refinement of Tools and Systems	Transition to the updated version of Livetext	Work with Livetext personnel	Lila Sybesma	Summer 08	Wages 6 credits of course release = \$6,000
	Refine student teaching rubric-pilot in Fall 2008	Retreats	Laurie Daily/Laura Heitritter/	Summer '08	\$125 X 2 days X 2 people = \$600
	Provide structured opportunities for dialogue about critical issues related to assessment within the Livetext system.	Retreats/TEC meetings	Daily/Heitritter/Sybesma	Summer '08	\$125 x days X 4 people = \$1,200
	Continue to incorporate documentation in the Exhibit section of Livetext	Meeting with Eunice Meredith Sybesma's summer work Preparation for the Iowa team	Lila Sybesma	Fall/Spring 2008/09	Institutional support in kind \$800 for the Drake visit The remainder will be

		visit fall of '08			done as part of the course release for the Project Coordinator \$12,000
Student Support	Continue to offer technical support on a weekly basis to students.	30 help sessions will be scheduled in the computer lab for fall '08/spring '09	Lila Sybesma	Fall 08/Spring 09	Done as part of the course release for the Project Coordinator \$12,000
	Identify and train student/graduate to provide student-led workshops for exit portfolios	Sybesma will identify 2 students two train to lead student orientation sessions	Lila Sybesma	Fall 08	\$200 Institutional workstudy support in kind = \$200
Faculty development and support	Training for updated system in Livetext	Bring Livetext personnel to NWC	Lila Sybesma	Summer 08	\$1,500
	Focus on analysis of the candidate and program data that we are currently collecting as well as identify other data sources for program improvement		Laurie Daily/ Laura Heitritter/ Lila Sybesma	Summer 08- Summer 09	In kind, institutional support NWC= \$2,400 TQE = 0

III. Budget Requests

Personnel	\$16,100	
Wages (course release)	\$12,000	
Stipends-faculty \$125/day x 8 days x 6 FT faculty	\$ 6,000	
Stipend-student	\$ 200	
Professional Services/Professional Development	\$1,500	
Fees-Livertext personnel -2 days of on-site training (\$750/day)		
Software		
Hardware		
Supplies and Materials		
Phone/Mail		
Other – specify:		
Other – specify:		
Total	\$ 19,700	

VI. Budget Narrative: Note that the objective of the grant is to bring all programs up to standard over the life of the grant. Funding this year will be made up to \$20,000. To receive the maximum award, your proposal should demonstrate either great need or great complexity/size of program as well as prudent use of any previous awards and a clear plan for sustainability.

IV. Budget Narrative

Please describe how funds will be used (1-3 pages).

Personnel

Wages

Course release \$12,000

(\$2000 x 3 credits x 2 semesters)

One faculty member will be given a 3 credit course release to become the Project Coordinator for this effort. The costs are approximately \$2000 per credit for each of the three credits for fall and spring semesters, which brings the costs to \$12,000 for the year. Based on the testimony of others who have adopted such a system, this investment of personnel resources is critical to the successful implementation of the system.

She will be paid through institutional funds for summer work on the project.

Stipends \$ 6,000

(\$125 x 6 faculty members x 8 days-4 for summer/fall 08; 4 for spring/summer 09)

In order to continue the planning/development and refinement necessary to make plans for improvement and implementation, 8 full day sessions have been scheduled for 6 members of the faculty in the Education department between July and June. The stipend for each will be at the rate of \$125 per day. Two faculty members will work on rubrics. The others will focus on data retrieval and analysis. All other costs associated with the retreat will be contributed in-kind from the departmental funds.

Student/Graduate Stipend (\$50 x 4) \$ 200

Twice per semester (4 x/year) we will train to have a student/graduate provide workshops specifically aimed at helping students develop and refine their exit portfolios. These would be 2-3 hours workshops, and the leader would receive a \$50 stipend for each session.

Training will be paid from institutional funds.

Expenses

Professional Development \$ 1,500

Livertext consultant (\$750/day x 2 days)

Total Costs	\$19,700
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IV. Sustainability Plan. Write a clear succinct plan (1 to 3 pages max) for how the work will continue to fully meet the requirements of Chapter 79 for assessment systems. Describe how your institution plans to sustain the performance assessment system when TQE grant support is no longer available. Some considerations you may want to address include plans to finance sustainability and the capacity you have to sustain the work you have completed.

There are several steps that have been taken to ensure the sustainability of the assessment work of the Teacher Education Committee, some of which were in place before the Livetext funding was available. NWC provides credit load release for the Assessment Coordinator, which is critical to the work of our department, since we are so heavily focused on assessment of the competency of our students. NWC also has an Assessment Committee in place, and the leadership of that committee has asked that the faculty members of the Education department be willing to work with other departments on their assessment plans. Many of the professional programs on campus are proficient in designing and implementing comprehensive assessment plans; however, many of the liberal arts areas are less well-versed in candidate/program assessment beyond specific course-level assessments

Our recent visit with Barry Wilson provided us with an outsider's perspective on our assessment system as we approach our national and state levels reviews this fall. He was quick to assure us that we are doing excellent work in candidate assessment; however, he did note that our program assessment is somewhat weak. As a result, our professional development efforts are going to shift over this next year of the grant to focus more intensely on the analysis of program assessment data in order to make decisions about program improvement efforts. Livetext has been extremely useful in helping us collect data on both candidate and program assessment; however, now the harder work of analyzing and interpreting the data that we've collected lies before us. We do understand that this is an area of weakness for many Teacher Ed Programs, and appreciate the fact that the grant has provided more intensive opportunities to focus on the collection and analysis of good evidence that our students and our program are accomplishing what they need to accomplish in order to serve K-12 students well.

Overall, we feel that the TQE finding has provided impetus and support for needed changes within the area of assessment, and while we know that there is much work ahead of us, several consecutive years of funding has laid a strong foundation for the continuation of our work. Much of the funding throughout our years of the grant has been devoted to faculty release and stipends, and when the grant money is no longer available, we should be in a place where we have greater capacity to carry out the continued goals of the grant without additional funding.

Additional Materials

**Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319**

TQE Grant Final report

August 31, 2007

Institution: Northwestern College

Contact Person:

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Goals of the grant and progress toward goals:

Goal 1: To develop capacity of teacher education programs to electronically gather, manage and analyze performance data in order to improve teacher preparation

Objective 1: Convert various existing systems for data collection to one web-based system facilitated and supported by Livetext

- Step 1: One faculty member has been designated as the Livetext Project coordinator. Lila Sybesma has been working with the project since the spring of 2006. She received a three-credit course release for both fall of 2006 and spring of 2007 in order to implement the plan.
- Step 2: Linda Schulte, the administrative secretary and Lila Sybesma have worked to merge/convert existing systems with Livetext (Excel files, the current benchmarking system to include the various forms used to document standards met within the program). This project is nearly complete and should be complete by August 31.

Budget allocation: \$12,000 to be used for a course release for the project coordinator.

Most of our money has been spent for a course release. This has been the best use of the grant money that we have currently spent. Lila Sybesma held 30 student training sessions. She hosted an open house titled "Livetext Wednesdays. It has been a consistent component of growing knowledge of the assessment system. Students and faculty members are involved. Adjunct student teacher supervisors attended an

additional meeting to learn about the system. Students have been very appreciative of the consistency of this plan.

Objective 2: Convert various existing systems for data collection to one web-based system facilitated and supported by Livetext

We did not need the consultant to convert the tasks. Our coordinator, Lila Sybesma was able to do it. We have used work study time for the summer conversions of tasks and rubrics to the Livetext format as well. Because the conversion required more faculty time over the summer, we used \$625 for five full days for Lila Sybesma's work with this. This was a change in the original plan. We didn't use the entire training portion of the budget, so the additional cost was worked into the budget. In addition, the college supplemented the grant by funding twenty hours of student work study labor during the summer.

Most of the tasks from the fall of 2006 were assessed and stored on Livetext. However, it was necessary to have two faculty workdays. Since we hadn't spent our money for Livetext to do conversions for us, we were able to give stipends for two early February work days. We paid faculty \$250 for two evenings. We paid the Livetext coordinator \$500 for the same two evenings and the preparation required. We paid the faculty assistant about \$100. The faculty did two more Livetext conversion workdays in May and June.

Objective 2: Faculty assessment development

- Step 1: NWC engaged in 2 days of institution specific training with Livetext personnel in June, 2006. We did not have the trainer return for a third day of training. We preferred to have the 4 evening sessions for faculty.
- Step 2: Northwestern faculty had a two day retreat in June. More retreat time was necessary. Lila Sybesma coordinated mini-training sessions over the summer. She will again offer students Wednesday evening sessions through the fall semester.

Budget allocation: \$250 for 5 faculty members =	\$1,250.00
\$500 for the coordinator =	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total :	\$1,750.00

Northwestern College
Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant
June 30, 2007

Revenue

Iowa Department of Education \$ 19,868.00

Expenses

Stipend - Entering Assessments	625.00
Stipends - Livetext retreat	1,250.00
Stipends - Livetext coordinator	12,000.00
Livetext Meeting Expense	17.25
Livetext February Retreat	1,850.00
Livetext conference	435.00
Livetext May/June Retreat	1,750.00
Livetext – Data Retrieval	1,940.75

Total Expenses \$ 19,868.00

Summary:

Grant Monies already received	\$ 17,881.20
Grant Monies due NWC	1,986.80

Total Grant \$ 19,868.00

This grant has allowed the teacher education department to refine the assessment system. We were able to redo and standardize our performance rubrics. We were able to refine and clarify our assessment gates. We expect to continue to learn about refining the system as we work through this initial year of the Livetext system.

The additional \$1,940.75 was paid in the August payroll. This was for the Livetext facilitator for data retrieval and the faculty members for NCATE exhibit center work.

Lila Sybesma	\$ 940.75
Faculty members	\$ 1,000.00